

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the Official Action dated October 24, 2003. The above amendment and remarks to follow are intended to be fully responsive to the issues presented in that Action.

Applicant is submitting herewith an Abstract as required by 37 CFR 1.72(b). The Abstract is taken directly from the published PCT International application. No new matter has been entered.

The Examiner has requested a substitute specification. Applicant is submitting herewith a substitute specification with proper margins. No new matter has been entered because the attached substitute specification is identical to the original application papers.

Claims 25, 26, 41-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for indefinite claim language. Applicant has reviewed and amended claims 25, 26, 41 and 43 to address the issues raised by the Examiner. No new matter has been entered.

Claims 1-6, 8, 26, 40 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Uchida et al. (Japanese Patent No. 63-309768). Applicant respectfully disagrees because the subject matter of claim 2 is not taught or rendered obvious by the prior art.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the subject matter of original claim 2, whereby the second guide washer (30) is installed in the central recess (39) of the reaction plate (4). In Figure 1 of Uchida JP '768, the second guide washer, which is placed in the right side of the spring 27, is not installed in the central recess of the reaction plate. Installation of the second guide washer in the central recess of the reaction plate reduces the axial length of the device.

09/744,733
In re HUART, et al.

Because the prior art fails to point out each and every element of the currently claimed invention, the rejection of amended claim 1 (which now includes the limitations of original claim 2) based on 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) is improper.


The Examiner also indicated that claims 9, 10, 17, 18, 27 and 41-43 contain allowable subject matter. Applicant has also amended these claims into independent form.

It is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe additional discussion would advance the prosecution of the instant application, he is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted:
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